



# Spark Gap

Vol. 36, Issue 6, June 2020 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities for thirty-six years*

## ***ON OUR MARC:***

As you heard on the Sunday night net, our monthly meeting will be on the air again this month and right now I'm not sure if we will be meeting in July. REMC hasn't decided when they will open up the meeting room. Hopefully, we will be back to the new normal soon!

Unfortunately, our event for the Strawberry was canceled so the only event we have this month is Field Day. As you know, we still aren't allowed in the radio room and ARRL has come out with new rules for Field Day this year to keep our social distancing in effect and all of us healthy. This year as Bruce, K9ICP, has mentioned on the air the last few weeks, we can get on the air with our own call sign from our own radio room at home. Rules and instructions are on our website and ARRL website. If you have any questions on Field Day, please contact Bruce at [vicepresident@midstatehams.org](mailto:vicepresident@midstatehams.org). Field Day will be June 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. Starting at 2:00 pm the 27<sup>th</sup> and going until 5:00pm on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

Hope you will join us on the air Saturday.

*Jacki, KI6QOG*

*President*

\*\*\*\*\* **IMPORTANT** \*\*\*\*\*

***The officer's will hold a meeting on the air MARC Repeater 146.835 – (PL 151.4) this Saturday, June 20th at 9:00 AM.***

***Hope you can make it and hopefully you will have coffee. You have to supply your own donuts.***





*Birthdays for the month of June:*

*WA9VBG - Sam Carter*

*W8ISH - Jack Parker*

*K9OMT - Michael Turner*

*N9KMS - Vince Mathews*

*W9KMS - Steven Seifert*



**WWW.ARRL.ORG**

**JUNE 27TH THROUGH JUNE 28TH, 2020**

Please feel free to send me pictures of your Field Day at your home or some other location you choose to operate from. Your pictures will be in the July Spark Gap.

Have fun and have good DX. 73, N9SIU

## - ARRL FIELD DAY 2020 -

ARRL Field Day will soon be here. MARC will be participating again this year. For those of you not familiar with Field Day, it is an annual activity open to all amateurs covered by the ARRL/RAC Field Organization and countries within Region 2. Its purpose is to practice operating under abnormal conditions (i.e., emergency limitations and/or extreme band activities). The goal is to work as many stations as possible on the 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10-meter HF bands as well as all bands above 50 MHz. using phone, CW, or digital operations (no repeater contacts allowed).

As always, Field Day is on the fourth full weekend of the month of June. That will be June 27-28 this year. Field Day will begin at 18:00 UTC (2:00 pm EDT) on Saturday and ending at 20:59 UTC (5:00 pm EDT) Sunday.

In past years, MARC has operated Field Day from the Johnson County Emergency Operations Center (i.e., Club radio room). However, given the Covid-19 need for social distancing and limits on the club radio access, we will be doing something different this year. ARRL has made some temporary rule changes for 2020.

The temporary rule waiver for 2020 allows participants from any class to optionally include a single club name with their results following Field Day. For example: If Mid-State Amateur Radio Club members Bruce (K9ICP) and Chris (KQ9Y), both participate in the 2020 Field Day - Bruce from his Class D home station, and Chris from his Class C mobile station - both can include the radio club's name when reporting their individual personal call signs. In this example Bruce would be using the exchange 1-D IN (1 - transmitter, Class D, Indiana). Chris would use the exchange 1-C IN (1 - transmitter, Class C, Indiana). (See the definition of station classifications in the ARRL rules on-line: <http://www.arrl.org/field-day> )

Upon completion of Field Day, your log needs to be submitted to the ARRL no later than Tuesday, July 28, 2020 via: Field Day App at: <https://field-day.arrl.org/fdentry.php> or Field Day Entries, 225 Main St., Newington, CT. 06111. Your cover note for the log should indicate that you are submitting for the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club, Johnson County, Indiana.

If you have further questions or clarification please review the Field Day rules on the ARRL website or contact Bruce Tisdale at [BTisdale1949@comcast.net](mailto:BTisdale1949@comcast.net).

Bruce  
K9ICP

# Planning Your ARRL Field Day 2020 Operation

See also [Temporary Rule Waivers for 2020 ARRL Field Day](#) 5/28/2020

by Paul Bourque, N1SFE - ARRL Contest Manager

For most of us, ARRL Field Day 2020 is going to look quite different than it did in past years. Considering the impact of social distancing due to the pandemic, many radio clubs and large groups will not gather in their usual Field Day locations this year. Whether you are a seasoned veteran or a Field Day first-timer, there are many questions about how to participate in amateur radio's largest annual on-air event under these unusual circumstances. Here are some tips and suggestions to help you plan this year's operation.

## Don't Forget 6 Meters

Remember, Field Day is a non-adjudicated operating event and not a "full speed ahead" contest. It is also not an HF-only event -- all amateur radio bands above 50 MHz may be used during the event.

This includes 6 meters, which often offers significant propagation enhancements in the summer months around Field Day weekend, to help you make contacts. The band is available to amateurs holding a Technician-class license or higher. If you have an HF/VHF/UHF multi-mode transceiver, try making contacts using 6 meters for SSB, CW, or digital contacts. You won't need fancy beams or large antenna arrays. A simple vertical or dipole antenna will allow you to experience operating on the "Magic Band."

## Activities for Techs

One suggestion for clubs to consider in order to increase participation among their Technician-class members is to schedule specific times where these club members will monitor designated VHF and UHF simplex frequencies for Field Day activity. Keep in mind that the published national FM simplex calling frequencies should be avoided, and the use of repeaters is prohibited. This way, members who have equipment capable of VHF/UHF-only operation may be able to participate from their homes or vehicles. Your club can choose a list of frequencies and scheduled times in advance, and publish them in the club newsletter, or via email or other electronic means before the start of the event.

On the HF bands, Technician-class licensees have CW privileges on 80, 40, and 15 meters, as well as RTTY/data and SSB phone privileges on 10 meters. If you aren't a CW operator, try calling CQ on 10 meters SSB in the late afternoon and early evening on Saturday and see if conditions are favorable for long-distance communications. Try experimenting with a simple wire antenna for 10 meters -- you might discover that the band can offer plenty of unexpected propagation.

## Get Set Up for Digital Modes

You might want to explore one of the newer FT4/FT8 digital modes on 10 meters, 6 meters, or even the VHF/UHF bands. These modes offer an opportunity to make weak-signal contacts when band conditions often do not support voice communications. There have been reports of some great 6-meter openings in recent weeks, and these are likely to occur more frequently as the summer months approach. If you've never experimented with digital modes, perhaps this year is an opportunity to give them a try.

If you've never used digital modes before, the setup is relatively straightforward. You'll need a computer, a digital interface to connect the radio to the computer, and you'll also need to download one of the digital mode software packages such as *WSJT-X*. Many modern transceivers have built-in support for digital modes, so in those cases, all you'll need is the proper cable to connect the radio to the computer's USB port. You'll need a version of the software that supports the ARRL Field Day exchange (*WSJT-X* version 2.0 or later, for example). *WSJT-X* software is available for free download at [www.physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/K1JT/wsjtx.html](http://www.physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/K1JT/wsjtx.html). ARRL's book *Get on the Air with HF Digital* (2nd Edition) is also a great primer for anyone beginning to explore the digital modes.

### The Excitement of Ham Satellites

Another area you might wish to explore is operating via one of the amateur radio satellites, or "birds," as they're often called. Many hams have had success making contacts via the FM satellites by using a VHF/UHF handheld radio and a small handheld directional antenna, or a multi-mode VHF/UHF transceiver for the linear (SSB and CW) satellites. You'll only be able to work the satellites when they are overhead, so you'll need to know when they will be visible at your operating location. Visit AMSAT's *Online Satellite Pass Prediction* page at [www.amsat.org/track/index.php](http://www.amsat.org/track/index.php) to see which ones will be orbiting overhead, and at what times they'll be visible. You can find many satellite operating tips and resources at [www.amsat.org](http://www.amsat.org) as well.

### An Opportunity for Learning

ARRL Field Day 2020 may be the year you decide to participate solo, or with other members of your household. Perhaps the focus of your activity this year can be to expand your knowledge base and experiment with new modes or bands that you never thought of operating on. If you're a mentor to a newer ham, Field Day can be an opportunity to share some of your knowledge with them, and for you to expand your own operating horizons. This might be the year to leave your Field Day comfort zone and try something new!

..... ARRL News May 2020



**A good web site for propagation is DX Maps free to use and great source of where the activity is.**

**[WWW.DXMAPS.COM](http://WWW.DXMAPS.COM)**

## Let's get creative this year on Field Day

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

Since many of us are still hunkering down, and that doesn't look like it's going to change much by the end of June, Field Day is going to be a lot different this year. Our club has canceled our club event, and I'm really going to miss helping newcomers operate the GOTA station, the food, and all the camaraderie. That doesn't mean that Field Day can't still be fun, though. Let's get creative!

First, note that the ARRL has modified the Field Day rules for this year. The biggest change is that Class D stations, that is home stations using commercial power, can now work other Class D stations for points. Previously, this wasn't allowed.



The second change is that the ARRL will publish aggregate club scores this year. In previous years, this was only done for Class A and Class F entries. Remember, though, Field Day isn't a contest (yeah, right!).

Personally, I plan to operate 1B-Battery. I'm going to set up my KX3 on the front deck and power it with a LiFePo battery charged by a recently-acquired solar panel to get the 100 point bonus for alternate power. For an antenna, I plan to set up my 20m/40m fan inverted-V "GOTA antenna" in the front yard.

I'm going to shoot for other bonus points, too:

- copy the bulletin—no brainer.
- promote my location on social media—I am going to get on NextDoor and invite neighbors over to watch from an acceptable “social distance.”
- put some literature down at the bottom of the hill near the street and claim a public information table.
- send a press release to the local online paper and claim a media publicity credit.
- perhaps get someone under 20 to come and operate while I coach from an acceptable “social distance.”

If Class B isn't your cup of tea, check out the presentation, "Field Day and Social Distancing," ([https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/e/2PACX-1vSWypTtJ\\_R0s-UmysOEhQWwJwBIMrOavXqfs5AvigQzad8Z1c3JFn9TMI5ewxc8VVIIX-2g6bOTpUFD/pub?start=false&loop=false&delayms=3000&slide=id.g774df1657a\\_0\\_39](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/e/2PACX-1vSWypTtJ_R0s-UmysOEhQWwJwBIMrOavXqfs5AvigQzad8Z1c3JFn9TMI5ewxc8VVIIX-2g6bOTpUFD/pub?start=false&loop=false&delayms=3000&slide=id.g774df1657a_0_39)) by Anthony, K8ZT. It has a lot of great ideas, including ideas on how to operate mobile (Class C).

Field Day doesn't have to be a downer this year. Get creative and have some fun.

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## MID-STATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the THIRD SATURDAY of each month at the Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

See our website, [www.midstatehams.org](http://www.midstatehams.org), for maps on how to get to our meeting.

Everyone is welcome; you do not have to be a *HAM* to attend our meetings or a member of the club.

### W9MID Repeater:

146.835/  
146.235 MHz  
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

### Club Officers:

President: Jacki Frederick – KI6QOG  
Vice President: Bruce Tisdale – K9ICP  
Secretary: Chris Read – W9OQ  
Treasurer: Chris Mazzarella – KC9VGQ  
Repeater Trustee - Chris Frederick – KQ9Y

### W9MID Repeater:

443.525/  
448.525 MHz  
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

**Weekly Net: Sunday evening 7:00 PM ARES/RACES members and ALL RADIO AMATEURS**  
**146.835/146.235 MHz (151.4 Hz PL Tone)**

**The Official Newsletter of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club**

**P.O. Box 836  
Franklin, Indiana  
46131**

**Spark Gap Editor: Robert LaGrange N9SIU**

*Please send your articles to my email: [n9siu@yahoo.com](mailto:n9siu@yahoo.com) no later than the 2nd week of the month.*



*Special thanks to Johnson County REMC for the use of their community room for meetings and testing.*